THE CASE OF THE QUAKERS RELATING TO OATHS STATED:

Wherein they are Diſcover'd, To oppoſe Prophetical, To pervert Evangelical, To falſifie Eccleſiaſtical, and To contradict their own Doctrine.

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SECTION I.

Christians of the highest rank and greatest Proficiency, may lawfully in some cases confirm the Truth with an Oath.

Arg. 1. SAint *Paul* both knew the minde of Christ, 2 *Cor.*1.23. *And served God in the spirit, in the Gospel of his Son,* *Rom.*1.9. yet he was so far from pleading that of the *Essenns* mentioned by *Josephus, Bell. Jud. lib.*2.c.7. who profess'd, that [*quicquid dixerint validius esse omni juramento; & supervacuum esse ipsis jurare*] their word was stronger then the oath of other men, and therefore it was superfluous for them to sweare: Or that of the *Scythians*, who told *Alexander* (as *Quintus Curtius* reports) that their love of veracity was so eminent, as their affirming a thing was in stead of an Oath. Or the custome of the Heroick Age wherein (as *Homer* relates) the shaking of their Scepter or shaking by the hand, did more oblige men to speak the truth, and perform promises, then the most sacred Oaths could oblige succeeding degenerate Ages. So far (I say) was S. *Paul* from pleading such examples or his own exemption from his performance of this office of charity, to common humane infirmity, which in many cases requires the interposition of an oath in order to the procuring an indubitable perswasion of the truth: as he frequently confirms what he asserts in such like forms of sacred oaths as these, [*God is my witnesse,*] Rom. 1.9. [*I say the truth in Christ, I lie not, my conscience also bearing me witnesse in the holy Ghost*] Rom. 9.1. [*I call God for a record upon my soul, that, &c.*] 2 *Cor.*1.23. [*The God and father of our Lord Jesus Christ knows that I ly not*] 2 *Cor.*11.37. [*As God is true our word towards you, was not yea and nay.*] 2 *Cor.*1.18. [*Before God I ly not*] *Gal.*1.20. [*God is my record.*] *Phil.*1.8. [*Ye are witnesses and God also*] 1 *Thes.*2.10. upon which St. *Austin, Juravit autem ipse Apostolus in Epistolis suis, & so ostendit quomodo accipien-*

dum quod dictum est. [*Non Jurate omnino.*] (Augustine *de mend. cap.*15.) for the Apostle himself did swear in his Epistles, and thereby demonstrate, how that is to be understood where it is said, *swear not at all.* That these forms of speech are sacred oaths, is manifest from *Genesis* 31.50.53. where *Laban* and *Jacob* are said to swear in these forms of words [*So God is witnesse betwixt me and thee,*] and [*the God of* Abram, *the God of Nahor, the God of their fathers judge betwixt us*] and [*Jacob sware by the fear of his father* Isaack, that is, by God whom his father worshipt. And (to spare the labour of making more quotations) from the definition of an oath : which in *Philo's* phrase (*de legibus particularibus*) and in the common notion of mankinde, is nothing else but a calling of God to witnesse to the truth of what we say. From which, if eminency of Holinesse would excuse any man, it would have excused S. *Paul*, who before the writing of those Epistles, had given greater testimony of his sincerity, veracity, and love to truth, then any man living can (either in truth, or with Christian modesty) lay claim to. Who can have the face to say ? That he hath delivered the truth with greater *demonstration of the spirit and of power, in words which the Holy Ghost teacheth :* (1 *Cor.*2.4.13.) That he hath, *by manifestation of the truth, commended himself to every mans conscience in the sight of God* (2 *Cor.* 4.2.) more, then this chosen vessel did ? which of them, that tell us, we may take their word and spare their oath, dares vie with him in the perills, pains, hardships, labours, losses, which he sustain'd for the truths sake ? If then S. *Paul* (notwithstanding Christs prohibition, and that he could pleade more for mens taking his bare *yea and nay*, then any man now living can pleade) did yet frequently confirm his sayings with an oath ; what more then *Essaan*, then *Scythian*, then *Luciferian* pride, possesseth those monsters of men, who have the impudence to pleade their own eminency in grace, as that which exempts them, from calling God for a record against their soul, when the considerableness of the thing requires it ; From exhibiting to the divine Majesty that part of incommunicable honour due to his sacred and dreadfull name. Away with that smoakie pride out of Gods house, let it not be so much as named amongst Saints, whose character is humility.

*Arg.*2. Without the interposition of an oath 'tis impossible in many cases that Justice can be administred according to the rule of the

the Goſpell. To inſtance in one for all. *Exod.* 22. 10, 11. [*If a man deliver unto his neighbour an oxe, or aſs, or ſheep to keep, and it die, or be hurt, or driven away, no man ſeeing it: then ſhall an oath of the Lord be between them both, that he hath not put his hand to his neighbours goods, and the owner of it ſhall accept thereof, and he ſhall not make it good.*] It is the righteous Gods will, that Juſtice be adminiſtred, in this, and the like caſes, now under the Goſpell, as well as formerly under the law: but in ſuch like caſes, it cannot be determined according to the Evangelical rule, who ſhall bear the loſſe, without the interpoſition of an oath. For if the mans bare word be taken for the proof of his innocency, the controverſy will be decided by one onely witneſſe: directly againſt Chriſts precept: *Matt.* 18. 16. *That in the mouth of two or three witneſſes every word may be eſtabliſht.* And therefore the guiltleſſe party, in ſuch caſes as this (where no man but himſelf is privy to his innocency) muſt in vindication thereof, take in God to witneſs with him: that ſo the matter may be decided by two witneſſes at leaſt, to wit, by him that makes oath, and by God whom he calls to witneſſe with him. Breifly we muſt either make Chriſt by this prohibition [*ſwear not*] to patronize ſuch injuſtice under the Goſpell, as God would not patronize under the law; or proceed to the determination of controverſies contrary to Chriſts rule: or elſe put an end to ſuch like ſtrife, by the interpoſure of an oath. And therefore ſwearing in ſuch caſes is ſo far from being a ſin, as it is a neceſſary duty, not to be neglected without manifeſt injuſtice: to the preventing whereof, and the doing of right betwixt man and man, nothing is more contributary then Evangelicall grace: ſo far is ſanctity from exempting its poſſeſſore from the diſcharge of thoſe offices of charity, which they owe to themſelves and their neighbour in ſuch caſes.

Arg. 3. That which the ſpirit of Chriſt in the old Teſtament-Prophets (1 *Peter* 1. 11.) did commend, as that which ſhould be the practiſe of the choiſe ſervants of God in the Chriſtian Church called from amongſt the Gentiles, after his rejection of the Jewes, may lawfully be done by the holieſt Chriſtian.

But the ſpirit of Chriſt in the old Teſtament-Prophets did commend ſwearing by the God of truth, as that which was to be the practiſe of Gods elect ſervants in the Chriſtian Church, after his rejection of the Jewes and chooſing the Gentiles.

Therefore the holiest Christian may lawfully swear by the God of truth.

The *major* is undeniable, the Assumption I prove, from *Isaiah* 65. 15. [*And ye shall leave your name for a curse to my chosen*] that is, The people that I shall choose from amongst the gentiles shall use your name (*the name of a Jew*) in execrations, when they have a minde to denounce a curse, they shall do it in this or the like form, [*the Lord make thee like a Jew whom he hath cast off and made a vagabond upon earth*] parallel to that, *Jeremy* 29.22. *of them shall be taken up a curse* (that is, the form of a curse) *by all the captivity of* Judah; *saying, the Lord make thee like* Ahab *and* Zedekiah (two false prophets) *whom the king of* Babylon *rosted in the fire.* [*For the Lord God shall slay thee and call his servants by another name,*] that is, God will dissolve the *Judaick* Church & Common-wealth, so that his people shall no longer be discriminated from the rest of the world by the name [*Jew*] but by another new name that which was given at *Antioch*, where the disciples were first called Christian, by which name ever since the people of the God of *Abram*, have been called and differenc't from all other people upon the face of the earth. [*That he who blesseth himself in the earth, shall blesse himself in the God of truth: and he that sweareth in the earth shall swear by the God of truth.*] The sum of this whole Paragraph is breifly this. You Jewes boast of your priviledges, of my electing you out of all Nations to be my peculiar people; and you please your selves with these conceits, that if I cast you off, I shall have none to worship me in the whole world, I shall break my promise made to *Abraham*. But know ye that *Abraham* hath another seed then carnal Jews; and when I cast you off I will take the spirituall seed of *Abraham* (his children by faith) to be my people; who shall be known from others by the name [Christian] by these I will be secured, not (as I am now by you) in a corner of the world, *Judaea*, but in the earth, *for the uttermost parts of the earth shall be my possession*, and whosoever through the wide world, under the Christian name, shall call upon the name of the true God, *shall blesse themselves in his name, and swear by him as the God of truth*, as that God, who by chooſing gentile-beleevers to be his people, keeps faith with *Abraham*. See *Calvin*, S. *Jerom*, in *locum*. *Oecolampadii hypomnemata*, &c.

Arg. 4. That which the spirit of Christ, that was in the prophets foretold

foretold ſhould be done in the time of the Goſpel by the Lords people, as an evidence of their converſion unto the Lord, may lawfully be done by Chriſtians.

But the ſpirit of Chriſt which was in the prophets foretold that in the time of the Goſpel, the Lords people ſhould ſwear by his name, as an evidence of their converſion unto the Lord.

Therefore a Chriſtian may lawfully ſwear by the Lords Name.

The *major* is beyond all poſſibility of doubt, if it be conſidered how it is limited, for I do not ſay, that whatſoever the prophets foretold ſhould come to paſſe, may lawfully be done (for I know they foretold the treaſon of *Judas*, the Jewes rejecting of Chriſt, *&c.*) but, that whatſoever they foretold ſhould be done as a ſigne of grace, as an evidence of their converſion that do it, may be done without ſin: For ſin cannot be an evidence of grace; works of darkneſſe cannot demonſtrate him that does them to be a childe of light. The truth of the *minor* is clear, from Iſaiah 45.23. *I have ſworn by my ſelf, the word is gone out of my mouth in righteouſneſſe, and ſhall not return* (ſhall never be repeal'd) *that unto me every knee ſhall bow, every tongue ſhall ſwear.* From which Text that I may manifeſt the indubitable truth of each branch of my aſſumption, Let it be obſerved.

1. That this propheſie is to receive its accompliſhment in goſpel-times. For God ſpeaks here *to the ends of the earth*, bids them *look to him and be ſaved*, promiſeth ſalvation to the Gentiles, calleth the diſperſed of the nations to come near, and ſweareth that *every knee ſhall bow unto him.* Now the ends of the earth the nations diſperſed did not look to God, were not brought nigh till Goſpel-times, till then not the gentile world, but onely the Jewiſh people did *bow the knee and ſwear to the God of Iſrael*, to the Lord *Jehovah*. Before the coming of Chriſt and the gentiles embracing the Goſpel, they were *without God, aliens and ſtrangers to the common-wealth of* Iſrael, *and the Covenants of promiſe, afar off*, &c. *Epheſ.*2.11. *&c.*

2. That ſwearing to the Lord is here propheſied of, as that divine ſervice and homage, by the performing whereof gentile-converts were to declare their owning of, and converſion to the true God. St. *Paul* quotes this very Text to prove that all men (Gentiles as well as Jewes) owe ſervice to Chriſt, *Rom.*14.9,10. *He is Lord of all* (that is all nations are to do him homage) for it is written, *As I live* (*ſaith the Lord*) *every knee ſhall bow to me, and every tongue ſhall confeſs*

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to God. It were blasphemy against the Holy Ghost to say, that the Apostle perverts the prophets words: but he knowing the minde of the Lord in this text, renders that word in the prophet, [*every tongue shall sweare,*] (which denotes an eminent act of saving confession) by a word which comprehends the whole service of God: thereby implying that swearing by the Lord is one part of divine worship, and so eminent a part of confession to God, as it virtually contains all other acts of such confession; and that we confesse our beleif in, and subjection to the true God, as well by swearing by his name, as by any other act of divine worship we perform to him. Briefly, the plain sense of the prophet, as S. *Paul* expounds this text, is this; That as the Gentiles, till Christ (that light that lightens the gentiles) served dumb idols, confessing them to be Gods, by bowing the knee, by swearing to them: so after Christs calling the gentiles to the Obedience of the true God, man should turn from idols, & acknowledge the living God to be, what his names and attributes import, infinitely knowing, just, powerful, &c. by transferring unto him those divine honours, of bowing the knee and swearing, which before their conversion, they confer'd upon false Gods.

3. That God himself swears by himself (then which infinite wisdom cannot devise a more obliging oath) that the Gentile-Church as well as the Jewish synagogue should by swearing to the Lord *make confession with the mouth unto salvation*, that by two immutable things he might more abundantly shew unto the heirs of the promise the immutabilitie of this his Councill and predetermination, that Christians should homage him with this kinde of divine service: and give them as full assurance as 'tis possible for God to give of the acceptablenes of this part of sacred worship, And if this be not sufficient to put an end to all controversie touching this question, [whether a Christian may lawfully take an oath,] I shall despair of ever prevailing with such obstinate and reprobate-minded men, by the plainest demonstrations I can lay before them: for how can I hope to convince him with the strongest reasoning, who dare reason against Gods oath: Howbeit, That the matter to which God here swears (to wit, that under the Gospell men shall, in token of their conversion to the living God, swear to him) may be more plain; I shall give a further proof thereof out of *Isaiah* 19.18. &c. *In that day shall five Cityes in the land of Egypt speak the language of Canaan, and swear*

a the Lord of hosts: There shall be an altar to the Lord in the midst of the land of Egipt, and a pillar to the Lord at the border thereof. And it shall be for a signe and for a Witness *unto the Lord of hosts in the land of Egipt. For they shall cry unto the Lord, and he shall send them a Saviour. And the Lord shall be* known *to Egipt, and the Egiptians shall* know *the Lord in that day, and shall do sacrifice and oblation, yea, they shall* Vow *a* Vow *unto the Lord and perform it, and he shall be entreated of them, and shall heal them.* Upon which text I note.

1. That this prophesie concerns Gospell-times, *Onias* indeed that mock-high-priest, alledged this prophesie to *Ptolomy Philometer*, and applied the accomplishment of it to that mock-temple which he built at *Heliopolis*, in imitation of that at *Jerusalem*, *Joseph. Antiq. l. 13. c. 6.* and that discreet and sober Jewish priest *Josephus* himself in his Jewish wars (*l. 7 c. 30.*) seems to approve of that interpretation. But how wide such Expositors were of the mark of truth, and how unapplicable this Prophesie is to any time, but that when *Egypt* was called by the preaching of the Gospell to the acknowledgement of the true God, hath abundantly been demonstrated by *Eusebius* in his *Demonstratio Evangelica*, and the rest of the antient Christian Apologists, upon these reasons.

1. *Onias* erected an altar in *Egypt* out of a factious opposition to the true high priest *Simeon* and the *Jerusalem*-Jewes of his communion, and occasioned a schism from the *Judean* Church, as *Josephus* confesseth: *Bell. Jud. l. 7. c. 30.* But the effect of erecting the altar mentioned in this prophesie was the uniting the Egyptians and Jewes into one Church, verse. 23. *In that day* (when this altar shall be erected to the Lord in the midst of *Egypt*) *there shall be an high way out of Egipt to Assyria, and the Assyrians shall come into Egypt and the Egiptians into Assyria, and the Egiptians shall serve* (the Lord) *with the Assyrians. In that day shall Israel be the third with Egypt and Assyria, even a blessing in the midst of the land: whom the Lord of hosts shall bless, saying, blessed be Egipt my people, and Assyria the work of my hand, and Israel mine inheritance.* *Nunc Christo regnante totus mundus uno altari contentus est:* (*Oecolampad.*) now under Christs kingdom the whole world is content with one altar.

2. After God had chosen out *Jerusalem* for the place where he would be worshipt, the Jewes were prohibited by the Mosaicall law to sacrifice any where but there; And therefore all the sacrifices that were

were offered upon the altar, that *Onias* erected in *Egipt*, were an abomination to the Lord. But God promiſeth in this text, to have reſpect unto the oblations offered upon this altar, whether by Jew or Gentile; and therefore the acceptable ſacrifice and oblations here mentioned, can be no other then that pure oblation, which after the coming of Chriſt ſhould every where be offered, when Gods name ſhould be great amongſt the Gentiles, *Mal.* 1. 11. Nor the altar here ſpecified any other then that which S. *Paul* mentions, *Heb.* 13. 10. *We have an altar whereof they have no right to eat, which ſerve the tabernacle*; that is, Chriſts Table-throne of grace, whereon we offer to God his Creatures of bread and wine, and in the Sacramental uſe of them, celebrate the commemoration of Chriſts one oblation of himſelf once made for all, and our ſelves unto God, as a living ſacrifice, together with our contributions of charity, a ſacrifice wherewith God is well-pleaſed. *Reſpondeant Judæi, lege præceptum eſt ut altare non fiat niſi in loco, quem elegerit Deus, & hoſtiæ tantum a ſacerdotibus Levitici generis immolentur. Ecce* Eſaias *aperte docet quod Ægiptii colent Deum & hoſtias & munera offerant. Si Ægiptii Sacerdotium habeant; implebitur & in illis Pauli teſtimonium dicentis: tranſlato Sacerdotio, neceſſe eſt ut legis tranſlatio fiat.* Hieronymus *in locum.* Let the Jew, if he can, anſwer this, ſaith S. *Jerome*, In the Law there was a precept, that no altar ſhould be ſet up but in the place that God ſhould chooſe; and that the beaſts ſhould be ſacrificed only by the Prieſts of *Levies* ſtock; But lo *Eſaias* ſaith plainly, that the *Egyptians* ſhall offer ſacrifices and oblations; If the *Egyptians* have a Prieſthood, that Teſtimony of S. *Paul* is fullfilled in them, ſaying, If the Prieſthood be changed, there muſt of neceſſity be a change alſo of the Law.

3. Not the *Egyptians* but the Jews ſacrificed on that altar which *Onias* erected: but upon the altar to be erected, according to the tenure of this propheſie in *Egipt*, the *Egiptians* were to do ſacrifice and make oblation unto the Lord.

4. During the continuance of the Moſaical law and the ſtanding of *Onias* his temple and altar in *Egipt*, and before the erecting of the Chriſtian altar and the ſtandard of Chriſt in *Egipt*, the *Egiptians* cried for ſalvation unto their Idols not unto the Lord, made vows to them, ſware by them: they ſpake the language of the heathen not of *Canaan*: neither had they a Saviour ſent unto them, till God ſent Chriſt

to

to bleſſe them. Nor did *Iſrael*, *Egipt*, *Aſſyria*, and other gentiles ſerve God together in the communion of one Catholick Church. Nor did God bleſſe the Gentiles (as he promiſeth here he would bleſſe the *Egiptians* and *Aſſyrians*) by the name of his people, till Chriſt took down the partition-wall, made of twain (Jew and Gentile) one bodie, and called them a people that were not formerly the people of God. It is manifeſt out of S. *Ierom*, (upon this text) who converſt with the Paleſtine Jewes, that their Expoſitors applyed this text to the dayes of the Meſſias: but when our Apologiſts upon that conceſſion proved the bleſſed Jeſus to be the Chriſt; ſome of them applied it to the end of the world: at what time they conceive their Meſſias will come, upon the very ſame miſtaken ſcripture-texts, upon which our Millenaries ground their expectation of Chriſts perſonal reign.

2 I note from this propheſie: that ſwearing to the Lord is here commended as a ſigne, witneſſe, and argument of *Egipts* converſion to the Lord of hoſts: *And it ſhall be for a ſigne and for a witneſſe to the Lord in the land of Egipt*, that is, it ſhall be a witneſſe that the land of *Egipt* is become the Lords inheritance, that the Egiptians have dedicated themſelves to the Lord: that he is their God and they his people, [*It ſhall be for a ſigne*] this hath relation to the whole clauſe afore-going: not onely to the pillar erected, which is mentiond immediatly before, as if the ſenſe were [*this pillar ſhall be a ſigne*] for the altar in the midſt of *Egipt*, the *Egiptian* Cityes, *ſpeaking* the language of *Canaan*, and their ſwearing to the Lord, are as much ſignes as that: Nor doth the prophet ſpeak in the plural number [*they ſhall be ſignes*] as if he meant the two laſt particulars joyn'd by a conjunction copulative, the altar and the pillar, but in the ſingular [*It ſhall be a ſigne*] that is, the whole ſeries of thoſe divine diſpenſations; when the Egiptian cityes ſhall ſpeak the holy language, when they ſhall ſwear to the Lord, erect an altar and pillar to the Lord, this ſhall be a ſigne of *Egipts* ſubmitting to Chriſts ſcepter. *Nihil aliud vult, quam mutatum cultum idolorum & tranſlatum in honorem Dei.* Oecolam. *in locum.* the meaning of all this is, that divine honour and worſhip which they had given to their idols, they ſhould alter the propertie thereof, and transfer it to the true God. Is any thing more obvious then that *Egipts* ſwearing, erecting altars and pillars to Idols, was a ſigne of her owning thoſe Idol Gods? or that *Egipts*

ſpeaking the language of Gods people, ſetting up an altar and pillar to the Lord, her making vowes and paying them, her offering ſacrifice and oblations to the Lord, were trophyes of Chriſts victory over *Egipt*, and ſignes of *Egypts* ſubmiſſion to Chriſt: with what ſhow of reaſon then can we except ſwearing to the Lord out of the catologue of thoſe ſignes, ſeeing that is ſpoken with the ſame breath, belongs to the ſame thing, and therefore muſt be put in the ſame caſe, and be interpreted, (*Monumentum, & profeſſio publica quam Egiptii, ſtatuent ad teſtandam fidem & communionem ſuam cum Deo & Eccleſia ejus*, Junius *in locum*. as well as any of the reſt: A monument and publick profeſſion which the *Egiptians* were to erect to teſtify their faith and their communion with God and his Church.

2. Swearing to the Lord is in this Text made a branch of ſpeaking the language of *Canaan*. *They ſhall ſpeak the language of Canaan*, ὀμνύοντες τῷ ὀνόματι κυρίου, *ſwearing by the name of the Lord*, as the authentick Tranſlation of the *Septuagint* renders it, which Chriſt and the Apoſtles perpetually uſed in all their quotations of the Old Teſtament, as that which had been current through the world for above 200. years before Chriſts Incarnation, without contradiction of the Jewes, and not ſo obnoxious to adulteration afterwards, as the Hebrew Copies were, who were in the cuſtody of the Jewes alone, and in a language which none underſtood but themſelves; and therefore as apt to be corrupted, as the Jewes (out of an *odium* to Chriſtian Religion) were apt to corrupt them: as it is manifeſt they have done in moſt of thoſe Texts which concern the *Meſſias*; though this by good providence hath eſcap't their lime-twigg-fingers: for the Hebrew now extant retains the participle, *juramtes*; So that to ſwear by the Lord of hoſts is to ſpeak the language of *Canaan*, that pure language which God promiſed to reſtore to all Nations at the coming of Chriſt; *That pure and undefiled Religion which was at firſt reveal'd to man in Paradiſe*; for before Chriſt all Nations but the Jews, the inhabitants of *Canaan*, ſware by other Gods, and to ſwear by the *Lord of hoſts* was the proper *idiom* of *Jury*, where that God was well known. I know *Jerom* hath a conceit that *Nebuchadnezzar* after his conqueſt of *Egipt*, ſent a colonie of *Syrians* & *Arabians* into certain *Egipcian* cities, who introduc't the uſe of their tongue into thoſe Cityes; But he learnt this of the Jewiſh tradition-mongers (of whom he was too great an admirer, and through his credulitie received oftentimes falſe

falſe aimes) who put this Expoſition upon this clauſe, on purpoſe to divert it from bearing witneſſe to the truth of the Goſpell. And he muſt be a very great ſtranger to the propriety of prophetick language, that knows not, that the language of *Canaan* imports in their dialect the ſpeaking after the mode and form of Gods people, and that therefore *Egipts* foregoing her native gentile-tongue, and uſing the ſpeech of that people, over whom God had a peculiar Soveraignty, in ſwearing to him after their form, was a ſigne of Gods conqueſt of the *Egiptians*, of his tranſlating them from his dominion of Satan into the Kingdom of his dear Son: ſo farr is ſwearing by *the Lord of hoſts*, or in the name of the true God, in caſes of importance, from being a ſin, as it is an evedence of the Chriſtian worlds converſion to, and recognition of that God.

Arg. 5. The holieſt Chriſtian may lawfully, and laudably do that, which the ſpirit of Chriſt that ſpake by the prophets, hath made the doings of in Goſpell-times, the condition of Gods accepting men for his people.

But the ſpirit of Chriſt in the Prophets hath made mens learning to ſwear by his name, ſuch a condition, as upon the fulfilling thereof, he will number men amongſt his diſciples, account them his people that do, and root out and utterly deſtroy them that do not learn to ſwear by his name.

Therefore the holieſt Chriſtian may lawfully ſwear by Gods name.

The *major* is plain, for it is impoſſible that God ſhould tempt men to ſin by making the committing thereof the condition of the grand and comprehenſive promiſe, ſuch as this is of being his people, which includes all the benefits and priviledges of that relation. This were to allure us to ſin by ſtronger motives then Satan can poſſibly lay before us.

The *minor* I prove from *Jeremy* 12.16. *And it ſhall come to paſs, that if they will diligently learn the ways of my people, to ſwear by my name* (in this or the like form) *the Lord liveth*; *as they taught my people to ſwear by* Baal, *then ſhall they be built in the midſt of my people*; *but if they will not obey, I will utterly pluck up and deſtroy that nation, ſaith the Lord.*

It is beyond all poſſibility of rational doubt, that this Propheſie relates to the time of the Goſpel, for it is directed to the *Gentiles*, of whom Gods people had learnt to ſwear by *Baal*, called by God,

his evil neighbours, verſ. 14. that is, Nations bordering upon *Judea*, his own inheritance, his own land, whom he blames for touching the inheritance which he had cauſed his people of *Iſrael* to inherit, that is, for turning the Jews out, and taking to their own poſſeſſion the Holy Land, as did the *Aſſyrians* and their confederates in the Jewiſh Wars, the *Samaritans*, *Phœnicians*, *Ammonites*, *Edomites*, &c. whom he threatens to pluck out of their own land, as they had driven the Jews out of theirs, and to pluck out the houſe of *Judah* from amongſt them: this God perform'd at their reſtauration from the *Babylonian* captivity: To theſe Gentile-borderers (I ſay) God directs this threat, *verſ.* 14. *Thus ſaith the Lord againſt all my evil neighbours that have touched, &c.* and this promiſe, *verſ.* 15. *And it ſhall come to paſſe, after that I have plucked them out, I will return, and have compaſſion upon them, and bring every man to his heritage, and his own land.* After the mention of which reſtauration of thoſe Gentile-borderers, doth immediately follow this promiſe, *and if they will learn the ways of my people, to ſwear by my name*, &c. This promiſe then concerns that time when God would return to, and have compaſſion on the Gentiles, when he would call her beloved that was not beloved, and them a people that was not a people, and is made to them that had withdrawn *Iſrael* from the worſhip of the true God to their Idols, in whom they had perſwaded them to put confidence, by whom they had taught them to ſwear, in ſuch forms, *as Baal liveth, by the life of Baal*, &c. and manifeſtly imports this ſenſe. If as you Gentiles have taught my people (the Jews) to ſwear by your Gods, you will learn of them (when the law ſhall go out of *Sion* into all the world, by the miniſtry of the Apoſtles) to ſwear by my name, then you ſhall be built up amongſt my people. Yea, the matter of this promiſe being the ingrafting of the gentiles into the Church, the laying of them as living-ſtones in Gods ſpiritual temple, the building of them upon the foundation of the Apoſtles and Prophets in the midſt of Gods people: it could not poſſibly take effect while the partition-wall ſtood, nor have its accompliſhment till Chriſt by the blood of his Croſſe had removed the enmity, and making peace, had reconciled both Jew and *Gentile* unto *God*, in one body. *Epheſ.* 2. 16.

2. A dilligent learning to ſwear by *Gods* name, is here made the condition of *Gods* promiſe of grafting the gentiles into the ſtock of

Abraham

Abraham, of his accounting them his ſpirituall ſeed, of his building them up amongſt his people, of his giving them a name and a place in his houſe: as being that which is the way of Gods people, nay the ways of Gods people, the Old Teſtament-way and the New Teſtament way, of their proteſting what God they ſerve, in contradiſtinction to the ways of all other people; each of which ſwear by the name of that falſe God, whom they reſpectively ſerved; and in diſtinction from all other ways of confeſſing the true God: men may confeſs God in prayer, in thank-giving, in attendance upon the Word and Sacraments, and yet not glorifie him ſufficiently, in order to Gods accepting of them as true worſhippers, in order to his reputing them living-ſtones, fit to be laid in the walls of his houſe, the Church; except to thoſe forementioned and all other wayes of expreſſing their homage, they adde this, of *ſwearing by his name*, except withal they dilligently learn to acknowledge his omniſciency, omnipotencie, juſtice, and divine vengeance, by appealing to thoſe dreadful attributes, by ſwearing by his fearful name, when they are lawfully thereunto called, where this moſt ſolemn invocation of the divine majeſty is denied him; he eſteems all other acts of invocation not ſerious enough to oblige him that tenders them to a ſincere confeſſion: Men may poſſibly diſſemble in their bare word-profeſſions of God and his attributes, and therefore he puts Chriſtians here to the utmoſt trial of their ſincerity, by this moſt awful addreſs to him: He that ſwears by his Name, calls God for a witneſs againſt his ſoul, dares him to his face, challengeth the divine vengeance to do its worſt, in caſe he ſwear falſly; and therefore God eſteems this as the higheſt and moſt auguſt act of Divine worſhip that the creature can poſſibly exhibite to him, and as that which eminently contains all others, and comprehends the whole condition of the Goſpel, all the ways of Gods people confeſſing to him. Hence S. *Auſtin* in *Pſal.*63.12. interprets, *qui jurant in eo*, by *qui ſit Chriſtianus*, he that ſwears by him, that is, (ſaith he,) every profeſt Chriſtian: *Nam juramentum ſumitur pro toto cultu ut in* Eſai.45.23. *jurabit omnis lingua*; for ſwearing by God implies the whole worſhip of God, as in *Iſaiah*; *Every tongue ſhall ſwear to me*; which is the reaſon why he ſingles out this leſſon, as that which whoſo learns diligently, ſhall have the benefit of the book, be numbred with Saints, be written amongſt the living in *Jeruſalem*, be built up as a lively ſtone in the midſt

midst of Gods people; or if you will have it in *Davids* phrase, *Psa.* 63.12. *Every one that sweareth by him, shall glory* or (as the Septuagint is rendred in our Liturgy) *shall be commended* as precious stones, opposed to refuse stones: But I overdo my undertaking, in giving reasons, why God makes the learning of this lesson, the condition of this promise: It is sufficient to justifie swearing by Gods Name, from the imputation of sin, that it hath pleased him, to make the learning thus to swear, the condition of his accepting us as sincere disciples, of his ingrafting us into his Evangelical Church.

3. The not learning those ways of Gods Old and New-Testament people, *to swear by his Name*, the non-acceptance of this gracious proposal, the non-attending to those terms, the not-observing of this condition, the not-obeying God in observing the command here implied, of diligently attending to learn the way of confessing to God, renders men obnoxious to the dint of this fearful doom: *I will utterly pluck up and destroy that nation, saith the Lord:* whatever Nation or generation of men, (be they Familists, Anabaptists, Catharists, Quakers) will not learn diligently to swear *by the name of God*, to swear *the Lord liveth*, and the like Christian forms, they may perhaps bolster one another up with vain hopes, of Gods accepting them, with groundless presumptions, that they are the people of God; but God doth here reject them, and dismounts all their proud confidences; those *Babel*-builders architects of confusion, may strengthen one anothers hands in carrying up their castles in the air, in planting their *Sodom*-vines, but when their backslidings from the common faith are multiplied to the full sum, when their measure of apostacie is filled up, when God hath by these his scourges debated to his measure with his Church, for her humiliation and purgation, and has done his work, his whole work upon mount *Sion*, that he intends to make them instrumentall to; he will pluck up all such plants, pull down all such buildings, and utterly destroy all such people. He *who will not hold him guiltless that takes his name in vain*, will not let them escape unpunisht, who will not learn to swear by it, *in judgement, righteousnesse, and truth*. They shall perish who run foul upon this *Scylla*, as certainly, as they who fall into that *Caribdis*. A truly-sanctified conscience steers a middle course betwixt these extreams, and while it fears an oath, in vain and profane swearing, after the guise of heathens, fears also not to learn this

this way of Gods people, to ſwear religiouſly by his name. To this courſe we are directed by the compaſſe not onely of thoſe texts that I have alledged, but of thoſe alſo which are urged by the Quakers, and out of which they ſqueeze objections againſt this propheticall doctrine, which the holy Men of God, *who ſpake as they were moved by the Holy Ghoſt*, have thus plainly delivered: which that I may make manifeſt, it will be requiſite that we take the meaſure of thoſe Evangelical Scriptures which are forced to ſpeak againſt the Prophets.

SECTION II.

The Texts which they commonly urge, are.

S. *Mat.*5.34. *But I ſay unto you, ſwear not at all, neither by heaven, for it is Gods throne, neither by Jeruſalem*, &c. *But let your communication be yea, yea; nay, nay; for whatſoever is more then theſe, cometh of evill.*

S. James 5.12. *Above all things, my brethren, ſwear not at all, neither by heaven, nor earth, nor any other oath, leſt ye fall into condemnation.*

*Sol.*1. IF I would argue *ad hominem* or (in *Solomons* phraſe) *anſwer a fool according to his folly*: I need give no other ſolution of their paralogiſms grounded upon theſe texts then this: They deal with thoſe texts, as the devil did with that which he quoted to Chriſt, *Mat.*4.6. out of *Pſa.*91.11. *He ſhall give his angels charge over thee*, &c. For as he perverted that to a damnable ſenſe by leaving out that eſſentiall part of it, *In all thy ways*, So theſe men wreſt theſe portions of Scripture, by making a ſtop at *ſwear not at all*, and leaving out the words following, *neither by heaven*, &c. which were ſpoken with the ſame breath and are an eſſential part of the ſentence: which entirely ſtands thus: *ſwear not at all, neither by heaven nor earth*, &c. and prohibits ſwearing at all, by theſe or any other creatures. But what makes this againſt ſwearing by the Lord? here is nothing forbid, but what was forbid in the law, when ſwearing by the Lord was not only lawful, but expreſly commanded, as the objectors confeſſe, and is manifeſt from *Deut.*6.13. and 10.20. yet then ſwearing by them that were not God, was prohibited, and there-

fore

fore charged upon the Jews as a ſin, *Jerem.*5.7. *how ſhall I pardon thee for this? thy children have forgotten me, and ſworn by them that are no Gods.* Heaven, Earth, *Jeruſalem, &c.* are not God, and therefore Chriſts forbidding us to ſwear by them or any other creature, is conſistent as well now as it was formerly with the command of ſwearing by the Lord. And whereas they urge that of S. *James, nor any other oath,* as if that made any kinde of oath unlawful; there is nothing more obvious to him that piouſly ſearcheth the minde of God in ſacred writ, then this obſervation: That there are many propoſitions laid down in general terms, whoſe ſentence muſt be limited to the matter in hand, or elſe they manifeſtly contradict the light of nature, and other ſacred Texts. As, when Chriſt ſaith, *John* 10.8. *All that ever came before me were theives and robbers.* If we expound that ſaying, without any limitation at all, we muſt neceſſarily thence infer; that *Moſes* and the Prophets, and *John the Baptiſt* were thieves. for they came before Chriſt: But if we confine it to the ſubject on which Chriſt diſcourſeth, *viz. I am the door, the way,* &c. then the ſenſe will be found as importing no more but this, that all who came before Chriſt, pretending that they were, *the door, the way,* that is, the *Meſſias,* the Chriſt, or that great ſhepherd, *&c.* were theives. When St. *Paul* ſaith, *all things are lawful for me,* if, by *all things* we underſtand all things without exception, it will follow, that it was lawful for him to ſteal, lie, murder, blaſpheme, and what not; when he ſaith, *I became all things to all men,* if we expound his words without limitation, the conſequence will be, that he became a drunkard, an Epicure, an Atheiſt, an Apoſtate, to gain ſuch kind of men. But if we limit thoſe ſayings to the ſubject upon which he treateth in thoſe places, the ſence will be ſuch as becoms the Apoſtle of the holy Jeſus, *viz.* all things that God hath not prohibited, ſuch as I am now ſpeaking of, are lawful for me; I am at liberty to do them, or leave them undone, as ſtands moſt with conveniencie. ſo far as either *Jew, Grecian,* or *Barbarian,* retain any true principles, I am theirs, and urge thoſe principles, as my own, upon them, in order to my drawing them to embrace the goſpell. So when S. *James* ſaith, *nor by any other oath,* this univerſal muſt be limited to the preceding words, *viz. ſwear not by heaven or earth,* and contains a prohibition to ſwear by any other oath of that ſort which he had named, but not any other ſort of oath as that

form

form of oath is, which I urge the lawfullneſſe of, for it is apparent that S. *James* doth here epitomiſe the ſaying of Chriſt in S. *Matt.* and having mentioned ſwearing *by heaven or earth*, he comprehends the remainder of Chriſts inſtances, *ſwearing by the temple, by Jeruſalem, or the hair of our head*, in this abbreviation, *or any other oath*, as if he had ſaid, ſwear not at all, by heaven, earth, or any other of thoſe forms of ſwearing, by the creature, that Chriſt forbad the uſe of, in his Sermon on the mount, when he publiſht his royall law, or indeed by any form of that kinde. From the bare letter therefore of theſe texts, nothing can be inferred contradictory to my aſſertion, for they prohibit ſwearing by any creature, and I maintain the lawfulneſs of ſwearing by the Lord of all creatures: and to them that ſtick in the bark of the words themſelves, as the Quakers do, no other anſwer need be given to ſtop their mouths, but this.

Sol. 2. But that I may ſatisfie perſons of more ſober mindes, and ſpeak the whole and naked truth, *ex animo*, I give this as the full and adequate anſwer to all fanatick reaſonings from theſe Texts, againſt ſolemn and reverential ſwearing, that Chriſt and S. *James* are ſo far from prohibiting the reverential uſe of Gods name in ſolemn oaths, as they eſtabliſh it, while they forbid all irreverentiall ſwearing, by ſo much as Gods creatures, forbid to ſwear at all, though it be but by the creature lightly, and in common diſcourſe, upon this reaſon, becauſe he that ſwears by heaven, ſwears by him whoſe throne it is; he that ſwears by earth, ſwears by him whoſe footſtool it is, becauſe, though Gods name be not expreſly mentioned in ſuch forms of oaths, yet it is implied, and therefore we are not to uſe ſuch forms in our common ſpeech, any more then the name of God himſelf, which in the opinion of all but profeſt Atheiſts, is not to be ſworn by, but with reverence, and in extreme neceſſity. For the removal of ambiguity and ſtating the caſe, before I come to prove this aſſertion, let me premiſe theſe obſervations.

1. The Scriptures make a wide difference betwixt ſwearing by the true and ſwearing by a falſe God, in point of lawfulneſſe: but none in point of the obligatorineſs of the oath; becauſe he that ſwears by a falſe God does conceive him to be the true, and under that notion appeals to his heart-ſearching knowledge, omnipotency, *&c.* and therefore the true God interprets it as an affront offered to him, when perjury is committed, in the uſe of the name of an idol: Excellent is

that obſervation of the imitator of *Solomon*, *Wiſdome* 14. 28. The worſhippers of idols do *lightlie forſwear themſelves*; *for inſomuch as their truſt is in idols which have no life: though they ſwear falſlie, yet they look not to be hurt: Howbeit for both cauſes ſhall they be juſtly puniſhed; both becauſe they thought not well of God, giving heed to idols; and alſo unjuſtly ſwore in deceit, deſpiſing holineſs; For it is not the power of them by whom they ſwear, but it is the juſt vengeance of ſinners, that puniſheth alwayes the offence of the ungodly*; underſtand him to ſpeak of the Athieſtical Idolater; for as to the ſuperſtitious Pagan, he thinks that Idol he ſwears by to be a god indeed; *prorſus perjurus es quia per illud quod ſanctum putas falſum juras*: Auſt *de verb. apoſt. Ser.* 28. thou art altogether perjured, becauſe thou ſweareſt falſly by that which thou thinkeſt is holy. Hence, as Judicious *Grotius* obſerves, the people of God would never ſwear by the Gods of the Gentiles, but if they, with whom they made contract by oath, could not be induced to ſwear otherwiſe, themſelves would ſwear (as they ought) by the true God, and take an oath from the gentile, ſuch as could be had: which yet they looked upon to be as good a ſecurity, in reſpect of its obliging the gentiles conſcience, as their ſwearing by the true God was, in reſpect of its obliging their conſcience: as we ſee in the covenant betwixt *Laban* and *Jacob*, where *Laban* ſwore *by the God of Chaldea*, but *Jacob By the fear of his father Iſaack*, to put it beyond all doubt, that he ſwore not by that God whom *Nahor*, *Terah*, and even *Abram* himſelf worſhipt, before his call out of *Chaldea*; for *Iſaack* never fear'd or ſerv'd other God but him, who made heaven and earth; and yet he accounts *Labans* oath to oblige *Laban* to the performance of the covenant betwixt them, as well as his oath did oblige himſelf, *Gen.* 31. 53. Hence that ſaying of *Sophocles* in his *Hippodamia*: *the minde is incited by ſwearing diligently to avoid two evils, to be blamed by men, and to offend the Gods*: and that of *Cicero*, Offic. 3. *quod affirmaro quaſi Deo teſte promiſeris, id tenendum eſt*: *thou muſt keep that which thou poſitively promiſes before God as witneſſe*. Hence perjury amongſt the heathens is reckoned amongſt thoſe crying ſins, which divine vengeance never permits to eſcape unpuniſht, and which ſometimes God viſits upon the poſterity of guilty parents.

2. As to the forms of ſwearing, whether Gods name be expreſly mentioned in them or only implied, by mentioning ſome of his creatures,

tures, with reſpect to him: as when we call *earth* or *heaven*, &c. to bear witneſs to what we ſay. I do not finde any difference made betwixt them, either in point of lawfulneſſe or obligation, by the people of God, or God himſelf, in any age, either that before the law, or that under the law, or this under the Goſpel. So far were the Old-Teſtament-Saints from thinking the uſe of ſuch like forms (wherein not God but the creature, with relation to God, was named) to be prohibited by, and a tranſgreſſion of that divine law. *Deut.*6.13. *Thou ſhalt fear the Lord thy God, and ſerve him, and ſhalt ſwear by his name*; that is, onely, as our Saviour expounds that text. *Mat.*4.10. As the holyeſt of them never ſcrupled to uſe ſuch forms themſelves, or gave the leaſt hint of their diſguſting that practiſe in others. The good *Shunamite* ſware *by the life of Eliſha*, 2 King.4.30. *As the Lord liveth and as thy ſoul liveth: Eliſha by the life of Elijah*, 2 *King.* 2.2. *Hannah by the life of Eli.* 1 Sam.1.26. *As thy ſoul liveth my Lord I am the woman.* Abner *by the life* Saul, 1 *Sam.*17.55. *As thy ſoul liveth, oh King, I cannot tell.* Abigail *by the life of* David, 1 *Sam.*25. 22. *As the Lord liveth, and as thy ſoul liveth*: Uriah *by the life of* David, 2 *Sa.* 11.11. *Per ſalutem tuam & per ſalutem animæ tuæ non faciam hanc rem; By thy health, and by thy ſouls health, I will not do this thing.* It were endleſſe to give all the Inſtances that offer themſelves.

And if the New-Teſtament-Church had not been of the ſame perſwaſion, *viz.* that ſuch kindes of Oaths are not compriſed in the prohibition either of *Moſes* or Chriſt, S. *Paul* would not have let that form fall from his pen, 1 *Cor.*15.31. νὴ τὴν ὑμετέραν καύχησιν, *I proteſt by your rejoycing*, or more properly, *I ſwear. Ambiguitatem Græcus ſermo diſſolvit*; as S. *Auſtin* well obſerves, *Serm.* 28. *in verb. Apoſt.* The greek text removes all ambiguity, for νὴ in that tongue is a note of ſwearing. νὴ Δία *per Jovem*, νὴ Θεὸν *per Deum*: you converſe (ſaith he) daily with *Grecians*, and though you cannot ſpeak nor underſtand greek, yet this you underſtand, that a *Grecian* ſwears when you hear him ſay, νὴ Δία; and therefore let none of you doubt but that the Apoſtle ſwears, when you hear him ſay, νὴ τὴν καύχησιν, *I ſwear by your rejoycing*: Not would the Primitive Chriſtians, (who (under the Pagan perſecutions,) rejoyced to ſuffer the moſt exquiſite torments that witty malice could invent, rather then be perſwaded to ſwear by the heathen gods, or the *Genii* of the Emperours,) have ſworn (without the leaſt ſcruple of conſcience) by the health

of the Emperour; (as *Tertullian* in his Apology for them against the *Gentiles*, *cap.* 32.) assureth us they did. *Sed & juramus ſicut non per genius Cæſarum, ita per ſalutem eorum quæ eſt anguſtior omnibus geniis*: We do not only pray for the Emperors health, but we alſo ſwear by it, which is a far more ſacred form of oath, then that which you Gentiles uſe, when you ſwear by the Emperours *Genii*, and therefore we refuſe to ſwear in that form, becauſe we Chriſtians know, that they are devils whom you call *Genii*; But yet we ſwear by the health of the Emperour, which is more worth then all the *Genii*. The form of the military oath which Chriſtian Soldiers took even in *Conſtantines* time, is thus laid down in *Vegetius*: *Per Majeſtatem Imperatoris quæ ſecundum Deum generi humano diligenda eſt & colenda*; *By the Majeſty of the Emperour, which according to Gods Ordinance humane kinde ought to love and reverence*: If we would not therefore incurr that guilt, of condemning the generation of the righteous, that have been in all generations, which the man after Gods heart deprecates; we muſt ſubſcribe to this, that in ſuch forms of ſwearing, though we name ſome creature, yet we ſwear not ultimately by that creature, but by that God whoſe creature it is: Hence S. *Auſtin Serm.* 28. *in verb. Apoſt. qui per lapidem jurat ſi falſum jurat perjurus eſt, non te audit lapis loquentem, ſed punit Deus falentem. He that ſwears by a ſtone, if he ſwear falſly is perjured, the ſtone* indeed to ſpeak properly *does not hear thee ſpeaking, but God hears thee forſwearing*, and puniſheth thee for thy couſenage, as if the ſtone by which thou ſwaredſt had heard thy words, and repercuſts them into the ears of God: alluding to that of *Joſhua*, chap. 24. 27. *Behold this ſtone ſhall be a witneſſe unto us, for it hath heard all the words of the Lord which he ſpake unto us*, &c. But what need I call in humane, when we have as plain divine Teſtimony of this Truth as can be expreſt by tongue, given in by Chriſt himſelf, *Mat.* 23. 21. *Whoſo ſhall ſwear by the temple, ſweareth by it, and by him that dwelleth therein; and he that ſhall ſwear by heavtn, ſweareth by the throne of God, and him that ſitteth thereon.*

3. But the Phariſees made ſo great a difference betwixt theſe forms of ſwearing, in point of obliging the conſcience of him that ſwore to a performance of promiſſory, and to ſpeaking the truth in aſſertory oathes; as to teach that ſwearing in any forme but that which they called *Corban*, or that wherein God was expreſly named,

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did not bring him that took it into an obligation of performance. This ſtrange doctrine of theirs is fully ſtated, and ſubſtantially confuted by our Saviour, *Mat.* 23.16. *Wo unto you blinde guides, which ſay, whoſoever ſhall ſwear by the temple, it is nothing; but he that ſhall ſwear by the gold of the temple, or by the gift that is on the altar, he is a debtor*, that is, *obliged to pay his vows*. By the gold of the temple they did not mean that wherewith the temple was overlaid (for that was a part of the temple, and as blinde as theſe guides were, they could not be ſuch ſtark-mad fools, as to think ſwearing by a part was more binding then ſwearing by the whole;) but that wherewith the temple-treaſury was endowed, a part being put for the whole; gold, for the gold, ſilver, and other donatives belonging to the ſacred treaſury, whether they were already brought in thither, or laid up by order of the *Sanhedrin* in other places. (as for more ſafety the ſacred pole-money or half-ſhekel, which every *Iſraelite* paid every year for his ſoul, to the uſe of the temple, was in times of war depoſited in ſome ſtrong hold, till a ſufficient convoy could be procured to bring into the ſacred treaſury, either whole or in parcels, as they had occaſion to employ it, either in repairing the temple, or in buying of ſacrifices, *Joſeph. Antiq. l.*14.*c.*12.) or but ſo much as was devoted to the temple by vow, though not yet paid into the collectors hands; of which we have a notable inſtance, *Mark.* 7.11. *But ye ſay, if a man ſhall ſay to his father or mother, it is Corban, that is to ſay, a gift by whatſoever thou mightſt be profited, he is free* from the duty of relieving his indigent parents, *and you ſuffer him no more to do ought for his father or mother*; that is, if a mans parents in their neceſſity ſhall ask the honour of maintenance and beg relief of his ſon: if his ſon ſhall ſay, Oh father, that which thou deſireſt me to releive thee with, is a gift, I have conſecrated it by vow to the ſacred treaſury, and am obliged to pay it thither, and therefore cannot without ſacrilegious perjury divert it to thy maintenance. *Theophraſtus* as he is quoted by *Joſephus* againſt *Appion*, l.1. makes mention of this Oath, κορβὰν or ἐν τῷ θεῷ, by *Corban*, or the gift, as ſacred amongſt the Jews, and therefore amongſt other peregrine forms of ſwearing forbid by the laws of the *Tyrians*, door-neighbors to the Jews. The Phariſees (I ſay) taught, that *Corban* the gifts of the temple, and gifts upon the altar, were ſo ſacred, as whoſoever did ſwear by them, became thereby a debtor, that is, was obliged to performance; and this was

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the onely form of oath wherein the name of God was not expreſt, which they eſteemed binding: as to all other forms whether by the temple or altar, by heaven or earth, or any creature, in either of them men might bandy them at pleaſure, without the leaſt regret of conſcience, or purpoſe of performing them.

From this doctrine, their Proſelites were drawn into an opinion that they might call heaven and all therein, ſave God himſelf; earth and all therein ſave *Corban* to bear witneſſe of their ſincerity in making oath, by their names, and yet ſtill remain as free from obligation to perform thoſe oaths, as if they had not ſwore at all, but onely paſt their bare word: and from this opinion into a cuſtome of larding their common diſcourſe with all ſuch oathes, as if they had been no more then ornaments of ſpeech, then flowers of Rhetorick; as if ſwearing by heaven had not implied ſwearing by him that dwells therein. *Jurejurando ſuppletes orationem* (Philo *Jud. de decalogo.*) *queſi non ſatius eſſe mendacem relinquere. Scepteam non putat eſſe Dei* (as the Poet ſpeaks of a perjur'd King,) He did not think that ſwearing by his ſcepter, was ſwearing by God, who put the ſcepter into his hand: ὄρκος ἐστὶν ἐκεῖνος ὃν ὀμνύουσιν ὑπὸ τοῦ θεοῦ ὄντα (as *Apollonius* in *Philoſtratus*, l. 6. cenſured *Socrates:*) He did not think that when he ſware by a cock or gooſe, and ſuch creatures, he ſware by their Creator, but did purpoſedly chooſe to ſwear by ſuch things, that he might not bring himſelf under an obligation to keep his oath, as he conceived he muſt have done, if he had ſworn expreſly by God.

4. This being the ſtate of the malady, the great Phyſician of ſouls applys himſelf to the confutation of the opinion which bred and fed it, in the 23. of S. *Matthew*, where he refels that Phariſaical gloſſe, which made void the Law of God: and in the 5. of S. *Matthew*, he decries the cuſtom of their Proſelites, grounded upon that gloſſe, nay indeed the general cuſtom of the Jews in our Saviours time; for the Phariſees being reputed the Puritans of that time, the ſtricteſt ſect amongſt them, it cannot be otherwiſe deem'd in reaſon, but their doctrine, and the Diſciples practiſe, had a general influence upon all that would ſeem nicely religious, and made this diſeaſe of common ſwearing, by heaven, earth, temple, or any creature, but the *Corban*, in a manner Epidemical; and we finde the Scribes and their Scholars, as deep in this mire as the Phariſees; for

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our Saviour joyns them both together in preaching up this nice distinction, betwixt swearing by the temple, or altar, and swearing by the gifts of the temple, or gifts upon the altar; this last form of swearing they accounted binding, but the first as nothing; to swear by the temple they said was nothing, they taught that that was not swearing by God, and therefore did not make him that swore, a debtor by oath, to the performance of his word. That Epidemical practise, I say, of such customary swearing by Gods creatures without any respect to God (as if this had been no appeal to the Creator, and as it were a pawning of those invisible things of God, of which the meaneſt of his handiworks bears the impression) which this doctrine drew after it, is that to which Christ administers a remedy in this prohibition, wherein he forbids swearing in our ordinary converse, by the meaneſt creature (and by consequence much more by the name of God himself, though he mention not that form of swearing, because the Jewes never sware by that name but solemn oaths.) but not a reverentiall swearing when we are lawfully thereunto called. For the evincing the truth and suitableneſse of this, applying Christs prohibition to common and not solemn swearing, I shall produce arguments taken from those very passages in both the forementioned texts, which the Quakers wreſt to the favoring of their contrary opinion.

Arg. 1. That Christ prohibits oaths in common speech onely, is manifeſt from the kinde of oath that that law speaks of, which Christ clears from the falſe gloſſe of the Scribes and Phariſees, *Mat.*5.33. out of *Levit.*19.12. and *Deut.*5.11. *Thou ſhalt not forſwear thy ſelf, but ſhalt perform unto the Lord all thy oaths*: For swearing by *non*-performance of an oath, speaks the oath here mentioned not to be assertory but promiſſory. Now in all Judicatures, the Jews were daily called upon to make assertory oaths, touching matter of fact; for the decision of controverſies, but as to solemn promiſſory oaths (such as *Moſes* administred when he made all *Iſrael* avouch God for their God; such as *Joſhua* took of the *Iſraelites*, when he made them renounce the Gods of *Canaan* and *Chaldea*, and swear to serve and adhere to the God of *Abraham*; such as some religious Kings of *Judah* and *Ezrah* made the Jews take when they swore them to the *Covenant*) they were so rare and extraordinary, as the last of that kinde that we reade of, was that which *Nehemiah* administred to them

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that had married ſtrange wives, *Neh.* 13. 25. *I made them ſwear by God, &c.* which was near 400. years before Chriſts Incarnation, and therefore there could not be at the time of Chriſts preaching any one Jew living, who had tranſgreſt the law of God in ſolemn ſwearing to a promiſe, and not performing his Oath. Yea the Jewes were by the favour of the *Romans* exempted from taking the military oath, becauſe the taking of it in the gentile form, and the keeping of it in ſome caſes (as marching or fighting on the ſabbath day) was deemed contrary to the law of God. as *Dolobella* writes in his letter to the Epheſians. *Joſeph. Ant.* 14. 17. and *Joſephus* tells us, that upon the like reaſons, the Jewes procured of *Lentulus* a diſmiſſion from the wars. *Religionis ergo eſſe immunes a militia pronunciavi*, &c. *Antiq. Jud.* l. 14. c. 17. *I have paſt this ſentence from the tribunall, that the Jewes be exempted from the military oath upon the account of their religion. Dolobella* in his decree of diſcharging the Jewes, pleads the example of the Roman Generalls his predeceſſors. The firſt time that the Roman Emperours forc't the military oath upon the Jewes, was upon occaſion of a vagrant Jew, with his conſreers, abuſing the piety of *Fulvia* a Roman Matron: near the expiring of the reign of *Tiberius*, and the government of *Pilate*, when the Emperor baniſht them the City, and the Conſulls liſted 4000. of them for the wars: the greateſt part of whom choſe rather to ſuffer death then take the military oath. *Joſeph. Antiq.* l. 18. c. 5. Briefly, no people upon earth were more ſcrupulouſly tender of taking ſolemn promiſſory oaths then the Jews were at that time that our Saviour gave them this prohibition, and taxed them for not performing to God their oaths. And therefore to apply Chriſts diſcourſe here to ſuch kinde of oaths, is as prepoſterous as the laying of a plaiſter to the toe when the head is wounded: but the applying of it to their ſtipulations by oath in their private contracts, betwixt man and man, in their common converſe, and mutuall trading, was ſo proper and ſeaſonable, as nothing could be more: for in this caſe they were laviſh of their oaths and regardleſſe of performing them, beyond all humane belief; and if our Saviour had not read the riddle, and told us what ſhifts they had to baffle the law, and pave their own conſciences, ſo as they could without ſtraining, ſwallow ſuch camel-oathes, as *by heaven, by Jeruſalem*, and make no bones, either of taking or keeping them; It could hardly enter into our mindes to conjecture at what door this

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conceit entred into theirs ; that those kinde of oaths were not the oaths of God, and therefore did not binde the votaries to pay their vowes unto the Lord, but might be broken without the guilt of perjury.

2. The applying of Christs prohibition to solemn Oaths, either promissory or assertory, or to any but common discourse-Oaths, makes Christ himself a transgressor of the law ; I tremble at the thought of this consequence which as naturally flows from the Quakers *hypothesis*, as light from the sun : if we consider at what time Christ preacht his sermon in the Mount, to wit, while that sacred polity of the Jewes, which God himself erected, was yet standing, while those municipall laws under obligation, to which (as well as the ceremonial) Christ was born, were yet in force ; while *Jerusalem* was yet the City of the great King, and the Jews under the government of *God* establisht by *Moses* at Gods command ; in order to the keeping of peace, and execution of justice, wherein *God* had instituted Judicatories greater and lesser, and prescribed rules for the Judges to walk by in their administrations, amongst which this was one, that all controversies that came before them, should be determined by the oaths of witnesses : Had Christ therefore at this time prohibited the taking of oaths, in this case, it would have been an obstruction to all legal proceedings, according to that form of processe instituted by his Father : It had been the proclaiming of indemnity to thieves, murderers, blasphemers, and all sorts of wicked and injurious persons, and a turning of hell loose in that Kingdom of *God* ; for by the standing and yet unrepealed laws of that Kingdom, questions of that nature could not be brought to a determination, nor malefactors to condign punishment without oath. It had been a pragmatical and precocious dissolution of the whole frame of the divine polity before the time appointed by *God*, and assigned by his prophets, a turning *God* out of possession of his Kingdom of *Judea*, before he had erected his Kingdom in the gentile world, and by consequence an unpeopling all the visible dominion he had on earth, and leaving him destitute of subjects. For the veil of the temple was not yet rent with the force of Christs expiring breath, the hand-writing of Ordinances was not yet cancell'd by the blood of the crosse, the law either ceremoniall or municipall had not yet lost its obliging force upon all them that were born under it (as our Saviour

was, till by his death he had purchaſt exemption from it and dominion over it) and therefore had Chriſt or any of his Diſciples been called before the Judicatures to bear witneſſe in a caſe, wherein the civil law of *Moſes* required an oath; they would have thought themſelvs obliged in conſcience to have given oath. If he had been made a Judge for the dividing of the inheritance betwixt the two contending brothers, he would in obedience to the law have taken the oaths of witneſſes, if there had been occaſion for it. If he would have undertaken to have determined the caſe of the *woman taken in adultery*, as he askt for the accuſers, *Woman where are thy accuſers?* ſo he would have askt for their witneſſes, and have called the witneſſes to their oaths. Briefly, as they that expound Chriſts prohibition of ſolemn Oaths, do by their refuſing to learn to ſwear *by the Lord*, declare themſelves to be none of Gods people, none of Chriſts Diſciples, but unchriſten themſelves, ſo by faſtning this ſenſe upon our Saviours words, they un-Chriſt the bleſſed Jeſus, and make him a ſinner in ſtead of a Saviour, ranking him with thoſe falſe Chriſts, who under pretence of greater purity, ſought the diſſolution of the civil polity, whoſe ſtories you may ſee in *Joſephus*.

3. After this prohibition, we finde S. *Paul*, who received his Goſpel, not from man but God, approving of, and appealing to the evidence of witneſſes, in ſuch Courts, as he knew no evidence would be taken but by Oath, which certainly he would not have done, if he had conceived Chriſt to have forbidden the uſe of ſolemn oaths; when he pleaded his cauſe before *Lyſias*, he appealed to the teſtimony of the then high-prieſt, *Simon* the ſon of his *quondam* maſter *Gamaliel*, and the whole *Sanhedrin* (*Joſephus in the hiſtory of his own life*) to bear witneſſe, that he had been educated a Phariſee, and had been a zealous perſecuter of the Church, in going with the *high prieſts* orders & letters at that time that Chriſt appear'd to him; *of all which the high prieſt and all the eſtate of the Elders can bear me witneſs*, Act. 22.5. In his apology before *Felix*, he challengeth his accuſers to prove the matters of fact they charged him with, *Act.* 24.13. *Neither can they prove the things whereof they now accuſe me*; he blames them for not bringing up witneſſes (the Jews of *Aſia* who found him in the temple) to alledge if they had ought againſt him, and challengeth all that were then in the Court, to ſay, if they found any evil doing in him, while he ſtood before the Council, *verſ.* 19,20. In

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his answer before *Agrippa*; he appeals to the testimony of those that knew him from his youth, *Act.* 26. 5. *who know me from the beginning if they would testifie*: S. *Paul* knew very well, that in a matter of life or death (as this was) no evidence would passe in Court without oath, and therefore if he had thought solemn swearing to have been made unlawful by this prohibition of Christ, he would rather have undergone a thousand deaths then tempt so many to make shipwrack of their immortal souls, by calling them to that unlawful act.

4. None of those forms of swearing mentioned here by Christ, nor any of like nature, would passe for current or legal before a Jewish Magistrate, but only such forms, as wherein the Name of God was invok't expresly. The Law was so clear, *Thou shalt swear by the Lord thy God*, as whoever should in any Court of Judicature tender any other form of oath, that form might have been excepted against by him against whom it was given, as insufficient, to end the controversie depending, as void in their Judaical law, which being of divine institution, it was not within the verge of humane power, either to dispence with, or alter the forms of proceeding therein expreſt. From this custom of the Jews in open Court, to swear by no other name, but that of God, the maker of heaven and earth, and sea, *Appion* accused the Jews of singularity, as hereby discriminating themselves from all other Nations, who did not so strictly tie up themselves to that form of swearing in their Judicatories, *Joseph. l.2. in Appion*; *Philo Judaus* in his Allegories of the Law, *lib.*2. pronounceth all them accursed that say, they swear by God; but 'tis usual for the wisest Jewish Scribes to run beyond their wits, in allegorizing the Law, because they do not look to Christ the end of it; Howbeit he recovers himself, in his treatise of the *Decalogue*, where speaking of solemn swearing before a Judge in a case of controversy, he defines it, a citation of God, to bear witness in doubtful cases and aggravates the sin of perjury in that case, from the infamy which it casts upon his name. And in his Treatise of speciall laws, where he adviseth, that when the necessity of the thing required an oath, men would not presently have recourse to God himself, but use some other form, and rather call in some of Gods creatures to be a witnesse, doth give sufficient hints, that he speaks there of elective oaths onely, which men use in private, and not such as men are called to take in the course of law; and therefore puts in this *proviso*,

Salvis legibus, when the law allows thee another form, that is, in thy ordinary communication, manifestly implying, that no form was good in law, but that wherein God himself was named for a witnesse. And indeed both Judge and litigants must have been out of their wits, if they had laid the decision of controversy upon such oaths as were præ-declared to be of no validity, as these forms were which Christ prohibits. Briefly, the Jews were accoustomed in their mutuall converse only, and not solemnly before the magistrate, to swear by the heaven and earth. Therefore this prohibition of Christ reacheth only elective, and not solemn and necessary oaths.

5. The reason which Christ annexeth to his prohibition, and prefixeth to his command, *that our word should be yea and nay*, is an evidence that Christ here speaks of common discourse, *swear not by heaven, for it is Gods throne*, &c. As if he should have said, the reason why such like oaths, are so common in your mouths, is this conceit, that you swear not by God in the use of such forms, and therefore are not obliged by them any more then by your bare word. But I tell you that heaven is Gods throne, and therefore he that sweareth by that, sweareth by him that sitteth thereon, *&c.* nay, your head and every hair that grows thereon is Gods creature, and he that swears by that, appeals to its maker: you cite God to bear witnesse every time you use such oaths, and God is not lightly, and upon every slight occasion in mens common speech, to be summoned in to bear witnesse, as the Pharisies themselves confesse, in their avoiding such oaths in their ordinary communication, as they think are appeals unto God. And therefore now you have learnd that in swearing by the creature, men swear also by the Creatour; as you would not be found guilty of taking his name in vain, disuse your tongues in your common talk from such forms, and let your ordinary word be *yea or nay*.

6. The motive that S. *James* urgeth, argueth that 'tis common swearing that he prohibits, *lest ye fall into condemnation*, ἵνα μὴ ὑπὸ κρίσιν πέσητε, or according to other Copies, *lest ye fall into hypocrisie*, ἵνα μὴ εἰς ὑπόκρισιν. If we follow the first reading, the emphasis will lie in the verb πέσητε from πίπτω, whence comes our English (with a little variation, to trip or unawares stumble; lest unexpectedly ye fall flat into the guilt of perjury, and while you dream not of it, become obnoxious to that damnation, which is the wages of taking

Gods,

Gods Name in vain: For while you fancy, that so long as you use not Gods Name, but only swear *by heaven and earth*, it is nothing, (when in very deed he that swears by heaven, swears also by him that dwells therein) you precipitate your selves hoodwinkt into the abysse of perjury, every time you call any of Gods creatures to witnesse to a falsity, and he that upon such grounds as the Scribes and Pharisees have laid, inures himself to common swearing, cannot be in extreme peril of setting Gods seal unwittingly to many an untruth; If we follow the other reading, *lest ye fall into hypocrisie*, which with *Grotius*, *H. Stephen*, and others, I rather incline to; (It's more likely that an hasty Scribe might overslip [*εις*] and he that should reade the Copy after him divide *υπονειν*, to make it sense, into *υπο νειαν*, then that any should have the boldnesse to insert it.) It will bear more resemblance to Christs Discourse about the Pharisaical mode of swearing, for which he calls them hypocrites, and for teaching, that men might use such forms without laying thereby the least obligation upon themselves to perform their promises. Now as this doctrine betrayed their Proselites to a customary use of oaths, so by that custome they contracted an habit of lying, even then when they seemed to be most serious, and to give their words the greatest confirmation: So that in effect their whole communication was a constant trade of hypocrisie and dissimulation. And while they pretended one thing (to give assurance by oath that they would fulfill their promise) and yet intended another (to lay no obligation upon themselves) by that kinde of oath, what was this but to play the knave under the vizor of an honest man?

7. No lesse plain Testimony to this truth, doth S. *James* his preface to this prohibition administer, *But above all things my brethren swear not*, πρὸ πάντων δε, &c. πρὸ is no where elfe in all the Scripture rendred [*above*] but [*before*] and it should be so rendred here. For the Apostle doth not by this phrase denote the priority of dignity of this caution (as if he would have us esteem more highly of this precept then of all the rest; for he commands several things of equal, if not more importance, and which it concerns us as much to observe whether we weigh the considerablenesse of the duties, or the pronenesse of men to be negligent in the observance of them.) *Quid est ante omnia nolite jurare? juro enim pejus est quam jurari? quam adulterari? non dico falsum jurare: Jurare dico; Jurare pejus est quam bo-*

minem

minem occidere? absit, hominem occidere furari adulterari peccatum est, jurare non est peccatum, Auguſt. *Serm.* 28. *de verb. Apoſtoli*, c.8. what means this, *above all things ſwear not*? Is ſwearing (forſooth) worſe then adultery? I ſay not, is falſe-ſwearing? but Is ſwearing? Is ſwearing I ſay worſe then man-ſlaughter? God forbid! what means then this, above or before all things? *iſto verbo cautum nos facit adversus linguam noſtram, ſi de manu aliquid faceres, facilius manui tui imperares ne faceret; lingua facilitatem habet motus, in udo poſita est, facile in lubrico labitur*, as S. *Auſtin* reſolves in the ſame Sermon: By this caution the Apoſtle would have us ſet a watch upon our tongue; If thou wert bid to with-hold thy hand, thou mighteſt more eaſily command that; the tongue is nimble and quick in motion, it is plac't in a watry Element, it ſtands on a ſlippery place, and eaſily lapſeth; But yet it is as apt to lie, ſlander, and calumniate, as to ſwear: This form of ſpeech therefore doth moſt properly import priority of place and time in our communication, which the Apoſtle would not have us aſſigne to ſwearing; as if he had ſaid, Now that I am perſwading you to patience by the example of the Husbandman, of the Prophets, of *Job. &c. verſ.* 7, 8, 9, *&c.* Let me give you this caution, that you would take heed of humouring the impatience of your ſpirit by permitting it to hurry you forthwith to ſwearing upon every provocation, though it be but by ſuch petty Oaths, as the Phariſees have taught you; Let not an Oath lie uppermoſt upon your heart, and come firſt of all before all things out of your mouth; Try all other ways of ſatisfying thoſe with whom you converſe, of the truth of your ſpeeches, before you atteſt it by Oath: *quantum ad me pertinet juro, ſed quantum mihi videtur magna neceſſitate compulſus; Cum videro non mihi credi niſi faciam, & ei qui mihi non credit non expedire quod non credit*, &c. As for my own part I ſometimes ſwear, (but ſo far as I am able to judge) not but when I am compell'd with the greateſt neceſſity, when I ſee that I cannot be believed except I ſwear, and that it ſtands not with my neighbours good, that he does not believe me, *Id ibid.* An oath is the greateſt bond of fidelity amongſt men, and therfore we ſhould have recourſe to it as our ſacred anchor, when nothing elſe will eſtabliſh men in the truth of what we ſay; *That faith which we make by oath is the moſt perfect that can be given*, ſaith *Halicarnaſſenſis*. *The moſt firm, and therefore ſhould be the laſt pawn of our veracity*, ſaith *Procopius Perſicorum*,

Perſicorum, l. 2. But does it follow, that becauſe we muſt not ſwear at all, not by any kinde of oath, firſt of all, or before all other wayes of procuring credit to our words, that therefore we may at the laſt extremity have recourſe to a ſolemn Oath.

8. The argument that our Saviour urgeth to perſwade us, that we ſwear not at all, but let our communication be *yea, yea; nay, nay*; evinceth Chriſt to intend in this prohibition, common, but not ſolemn ſwearing. *For whatſoever is more then theſe cometh of evill*, or, *the evill one*, that is, *of the devil*. For except we underſtand Chriſt to ſpeak here of ſuch voluntary aſſeverations as men make in their ordinary diſcourſe, and not of ſuch as either the weight of the caſe, or the neceſſity of juſtice call for; we muſt be conſtrain'd impiouſly to aſſent, that in all thoſe paſſages pre-alledged in S. *Paul*, where he called God to witneſſe, came from an evill ſpirit; that our bleſſed Saviour ſo often as he ſaid, *amen, amen*, which is more then *yea, yea*; had thoſe words put into his mouth by the evill one; that the elect Angell which Chriſt ſent from heaven to communicate the knowledge of future things to S. *John*, was inſpired by the devill, when we ſwear *by him that liveth for ever*. Is it a hard matter now to chooſe, whether we ſhould think, that the choſen veſſel, the elect Angel, yea, the Archangell of the Covenant, were led by an evill ſpirit, to ſay more then yea, yea; nay, nay; Or that thoſe men are led by a ſpirit of errour, and under Judiciall blindeneſſe, that cannot ſee, that the words of Chriſt muſt neceſſarily be referred to volantary raſh oaths, in our common diſcourſe, upon ſlieght occaſion, without reverence of the divine Majeſtie, or intention to ratifie ſome truth or promiſe of weight? But that which will give a clearer light to this text, and be a more full demonſtration of the truth that I am contending for, is this obſervation.

That Chriſt affirms whatſoever is more then theſe, in the caſe wherein he prohibits the uſe of more to be intrinſecally, and of its own nature, of an evill originall. For he does not ground this poſition [*whatſoever is more, is of evill*] upon either his prohibition or command; As if his meaning were, that 'tis therefore evill becauſe he hath now forbid the uſe of more; but on the contrary, he grounds both his prohibition [*Sweare not*] and his injunction [*let your communication*, &c.] upon this argument, becauſe *whatſoever is more then theſe, is of evill*; and preſſeth the intrinſecal evil, that is naturally, in that

that which he prohibits, (antecedently to his forbidding of it,) as the reaſon of his prohibition. He does not ſay, I have now forbid you to ſwear, or to uſe any more then *yea* and *nay*, and therefore the uſe of more is evill; But, the uſe of more in the caſe that I ſpeak of, is evil, and therefore I prohibit it: whence it unavoidably follows, that in all caſes wherein Chriſt here forbids ſwearing, it was ever a ſin to ſwear: a ſin in the Patriarchs, and Old-Teſtament-Saints, before this prohibition, as well as it is in us Chriſtians ſince; that is, raſhly, prophanely, irreverently, in our ordinary communication: and that Chriſt hath not made that kinde of reverent ſwearing a ſin to Chriſtians, that was the duty and commendation of his antient people.

1. It is manifeſt, that all raſh ſwearing, whether in Jew or Chriſtian, proceeds from the evill heart of him that inures himſelf to it; from that pride, athieſm, and hypocriſy that lodgeth in the breaſt, doth the mouth utter all vain, fruitleſſe, and precipitate oaths and aſſeverations; and therefore, he that fears God, will abſtain from all cuſtomary oaths, not only for fear of the event (*ne jurando ad facilitatem jurandi veniatur ex facilitate ad conſuetudinem ex conſuetudine in perjurium decidatur*, S. Auſtin *de mend.* c. 15. *leſt by ſwearing* we contract a facility to ſwear, and fall from a facility to a cuſtom; and from cuſtome into perjury,) but in regard to that evill fountain, (the prophaneneſſe of the ſwearers hearts) whence all ſuch ſlink calves of the lips are caſt. In a word, the *Ruffian* diſgorgeth oaths from the ſame Principle, that the Fanatick powreth out *extempore* prayers, neither of them conſider, that they are before God, while they invoke his name, and therefore they are ſo ready to offer the ſacrifice of fools. As there are certain forms of words, at the uſing whereof, evill ſpirits, (by vertue of diabolicall inſtitution) preſent themſelves, ſo all forms of invoking God, either by Oath or prayer, exhibit the divine preſence to us, of which preſence, if they had regard, the one would not think it nothing to ſwear, nor the other to pray unadviſedly; neither of them would be ſo haſty with their mouths, ſo haſty to utter, *quicquid in buccam*, if they did conſider they were before God: My ranking them together will diſpleaſe them both, but let them wreak their ſpleen upon *Solomon*, who hath coupled them as brethren in iniquity, as alike-guilty of Athieſtical prophaneſſe, and hath preſcribed the ſame method of

cure,

cure for them both, if they have wit or grace to apply themselves to the observation of his rules. *Eccles.* 5. 1.

2. And it is as manifest from the Instances of Christ and Saint *Paul*, that more then these sometimes, and in some cases, proceeds from good, from a divine principle, from an honest and gracious heart, to wit, when strong asseverations even by oath are used

1. Reverentially, as a solemn invocation of Gods name, as the celebration of the highest and most august act of divine worship and adoration that can possiblie be tendred to the divine majesty.

2. Deliberately, with due consideration and preponderation of the weight of the thing, the importance of our Neighbours beleeving it, the probability that he will be prevail'd to beleeve us, upon the interposition and assurance of the oath, *Ex ideo non invenitur juras se nisi scribens ubi consideratio cautior non habet linguam præcipitem.* We do not finde, (saith S. *Austin de mend.* c. 15.) that S. *Paul* did swear, but when he was writing, because the pen is not so great a blabb as the tongue; men are more circumspect of the words that fall from their quill then of them that drop from their lipps.

3. Sincerely, with a purpose to lay as great an Obligation upon thy self to keep thy promise, and swear truly, as thy making oath imports to thy neighbour, when thy minde and words are both of a colour, and the impressions of thy soul correspond with the expressions of thy mouth; when thy conscience can tell thee that thou speakest before God in thy heart what thou utterest to thy neighbour in words.

All these conditions concur'd in our Saviours and S. *Pauls* asseverations, and therefore though they were more then these, yet they proceeded not of evill, but from a good and honest heart, and were all wanting in those Pharisaicall oaths which our Saviour condemns; wherein they had neither reverential thoughts of God (for they conceived they did by those forms swear by God) nor weighed the matter and ponderated circumstances, but upon every slight, upon no occasion bolted out fruitless oathes: nor did they intend to binde themselves to a performance of their words, for they accounted themselves as free after such oathes as if they had never made them. Such kinde of additions to our yea and nay, are of themselves evill, and therefore forbidden, But the ground and reason of Christs prohibition

does not reach the other sort of additions.

9. That I may make the two Testaments kisse one another at parting, and bring the ends of my discourse together, Let it be considered from the propheſies before-quoted, That to interpret thoſe Evangelical texts as prohibitions to Christians to swear in any caſe, draws after it theſe blaſphemous conſequences.

1. That Christ who came to accompliſh and seal propheſies, to fullfill what was spoken by the mouth of the prophets, which have been since the world began, did contradict by his precepts and prohibit the accomplishment of thoſe propheſies, that foretold, that under the Goſpel, when Gods name ſhould be great in all the earth, his elect and choſen ſervants ſhould swear by the God of truth, as an evidence of their converſion to him from idols.

2. That S. *James* was by the Holy Ghoſt (which Christ promiſed ſhould *leade his Apoſtles into all truth*) to forbid that, (*viz.* to learn to swear after the way of Gods people *the Lord liveth*) under pain of falling into condemnation, or at leaſt into hypocriſy; which the Spirit of Christ in the holy Prophets perſwades Christians to do, under pain of utter deſtruction, in caſe of neglect, and by the promiſe of being built up in the midſts of Gods people, in caſe they would diligently, *learn to swear by his name*: which the ſame ſpirit commends to Christians as a ſigne of their ſincere and cordiall acceptance of the true God for their God.

3. That if the Chriſtian Church does not perform homage to the God of truth by ſwearing as well as bleſſing in his name; If their tongue does not as well ſwear as their knees bow to him, then the Chriſtian people are not the people of the *Meſſias*, the *Meſſias* is not yet come, but ſtill to be expected; then the bleſſed Jeſus is not that Christ of whom the prophets ſpeak, but as the Jews at his arraignment, and their poſterity blaſphemouſly ſtile him, a deceiver, and a counterfeit; For by the prophets it was foretold, that at his exhibition and vocation of the gentiles to the knowledge of the true God, the gentiles called by his name ſhould ſwear by the God of truth, throughout the earth, *&c.* Yield but this much to a Jew or Pagan, that the Chriſtian law forbids worſhipping of God, by ſwearing by his name, forbids any other confirmation of what we affirm but *yea yea*, *nay nay*; and you do not only deprive the Chriſtian Cauſe and Church of one of her ſtrongeſt bulwarks, of one of thoſe demonſtra-

tions,

tions of the ſpirit (*the ſpirit of propheſy in the holy men of old*, whereby the Champions of the Chriſtian faith have irrefragably proved againſt all aſſailants, that Jeſus is the prophets Chriſt, *viz.* becauſe ſince his calling of us gentiles by his goſpell, we have worſhipt the true God by ſwearing by his name; but alſo adminiſter to Infidells an unanſwerable argument for them to prove, that that Jeſus whom we Chriſtians worſhip for the Chriſt, is not indeed the very Chriſt, *viz.* becauſe he hath forbid that worſhip to be exhibited, which the prophets foretold men ſhould learn to tender the God of truth, at the coming of that Chriſt, whom they ſpeak of. It is not poſſible to imagine any thing more unlike, or oppoſite to one another, then that Chriſt and his diſciples, which the prophets deſcribe, are, to what this gloſſe of the Quakers preſents Jeſus Chriſt and his diſciples to be. In the reign of the Prophets Chriſt, Gods choſen ones of the Gentiles are to do him homage, to acknowledge their ſubjection to him, dependance on him, awe of him, and his dreadfull attributes, by *ſwearing by his name*; But in the reign of the Quakers Chriſt, the world indeed may take its own courſe, but they whom God hath called and choſen out of the world, are not to ſwear at all. The people of the Prophets Chriſt, at what time he ſhould publiſh his royall law, and men ſhould be taught of God, were to learn to ſwear, *the Lord liveth*, and to be made to ply this leſſon with a promiſe *to be built up, if they learn'd it diligently*, with a threat, *to be plucked up*, if they did not, But the people of the Quakers Chriſt, are taught of God, that they muſt not learn this leſſon, and are terrified from their book with clamours againſt it, as evill, as leading to deſtruction, *&c.* For the oppoſition is ſo palpable, as I need not illuſtrate it with more inſtances. It can now therefore be a matter of no great difficulty to determine, whether expoſition and practiſe, grounded upon theſe expoſitions, is more juſtifiable. That of the Chriſtian Church in all ages which ſo expounds Chriſts words, as not prohibiting her to give to God the honour that's due to him, by a reverentiall invocating of his great name, in ſacred and ſolemn oaths, to the end that the ſayings of the prophets may be fulfill'd, & our Jeſus demonſtrated to be the Chriſt; or that of the Quakers whoſe gloſſe defrauds God of his due homage, robs the King of Saints of one of the prime Jewells of his crown, preſents the ever-bleſſed Jeſus in the form of an Impoſtor and falſe Chriſt, leads directly to the gulf of groſſeſt infidelity and denial

of Christ; and sets the Old and New-Testaments, the Prophets and Evangelists at greater odds, then the *Manichæans* did; making the Gospel to contradict those holy Prophets, to whose testimony our Saviour constantly appeal'd, for the decision of that great question, whether he was that Christ that was to come? putting it to this issue, that he would forego the claim, and give them leave to call him deceiver, if he did not exactly answer that model, which the Prophets had drawn of him that was to come; if they could discern one line in the whole body of his person, of his doctrine, of his followers, disproportionable to those features with which the pensil of the Prophets had painted the *Messias*, *John* 5. 39, 46. and *John* 10. 37. and *Matt.* 11. 4. All that our Saviour did, all he suffered, all he taught, was by rule of prophesie, doing, suffering, teaching no other things then what the Prophets said he should, *Act.* 26. 22. and therefore that must needs be an unclean beast that does not divide the hoof, that is, that interpretation of any Evangelical Text, is baneful to the soul, that is not supported by the Prophetical as well as Apostolical Writings; much more that which goeth and pusheth at the Prophets, with so manifest a contradiction as that doth, which interprets Christ to forbid his Disciples to do, what the prophets say, he should teach his Disciples to learn, to wit, to swear *the Lord liveth*, to speak the language of *Canaan* in swearing to him, to confesse unto him by *swearing by his Name*; The performance of which homage to the divine Majesty, that it might be more august, reverential, obligatory to the Votaries, and satisfactory to all, in point of an indubitable determination of controversie; It is and always was the will of God, that Oaths should be reserv'd and sequestred to the service of God, and the publick weal of mankinde, and not squandred away in our ordinary converse; which will of the holy God, when the Scribes and Phariſees had made void by their Traditional glosses, our Saviour vindicates, and restores to its primitive lustre, by wiping off that dust, and renewing this prohibition, *Sweare not at all*, (that is, in your common talk) not so much as by heaven or earth, or an hair of your head, but let your common word be *yea yea, nay nay*.

SECTION

SECTION III.

WHen I had blown off the dust of false glosses from those sacred Texts, which the Quakers pervert to the condemnation of the universal practise of the Church of Christ, I hoped I had done enough to the Vindication of this part of divine worship, and to the undeceiving of that deluded party; But their stating the case, relating to Oaths and swearing, and presenting it to the serious consideration of the King and both Houses of Parliament, speaks them ambitious to be thought to have better company in their way of expounding Christ and Saint *James*, then I am sure ever set foot in it, or cast an eye towards it (except it was asquint) even Primitive Christians, Martyrs, and Fathers, who were (as they say) of the same minde and judgement with them. It will be requisite therefore that I demonstrate the impertinency of those Examples which they alledge, and the want of either ingenuity or honesty that they bewray in making of them.

Example 1.

Policarp being demanded to swear by the Emperours good fortune or *Cæsars* prosperity, denied, saying, *he was a Christian*, and so was committed to the flames because he would not swear, *&c.*

Answer.

It is a bad *omen* when men stumble on the threshold, as they do here in this first Example, in their alledging whereof they commit more palpable errours then there are sentences.

1. Whereas they interpret [*good fortune*] by prosperity, as if the Preconsul had required no more of him but to swear by *Cæsars* prosperity: *Eusebius* in the place quoted, hath [ὄμοσον τὴν Καίσαρος τύχην] which his Translator renders, *Jura per Cæsaris genium*, swear by the *genius*, the good *daemon*, or good fortune of *Cæsar*; which form of oath *Policarp* and the whole Army of Martyrs refused to take, because that which the Gentiles stiled *genii*, the Christians knew to be devils, which were worshipped under the names of good Angels; as hath been allready observ'd out of *Tertullian*, and every school-boy construe that verse, *Te facimus fortunam dicimus deamque locamus*; we make thee a Goddesse of fortune (which is the english of τύχη) and place thee in heaven, a doughty argument: *Policarp* would not swear

by

by an heathenish goddesse, or their Gods, who were devils, and therefore Christians must not swear by the true God, when the quite contrary follows: For God would not grudge idols that honour, if it were not his own peculiar.

2. Their comparing the oath which the Preconsul tendred to *Policarp*, to that form of oath which is in use in this kingdom, as they manifestly do, in that parenthesis [*which was then their nationall oath*] asperseth the King and both Houses of Parliament with the crime of heathenish idolatry.

3. Their expounding the Preconsul his speach [*take thine oath and I will discharge thee*] defie Christ, who said, *swear not*, as if *Policarp* had refused to swear upon the account of Christs prohibitition, and not upon the account of the impiety of the form of the oath it self; or as if to swear at all, though by the true God, had been to defie Christ; or as if swearing and refusing to swear at all, had then been the mark of distinction betwixt heathens and Christians: when indeed the true criterion was this, that the gentiles would have had the martyrs swear by the idols, but the martyrs would not swear but by the God of truth: these I say are most manifest perversions of the texts both of *Eusebius* and M. *Fox*.

Example 2.

Pontius and *Blondina* refused to swear, being often urged, *Euseb*, l.5.cap.10.

Answer.

It should be *cap.1.* where *Eusebius* reports their Martyrdom, and gives this reason why they would not swear, *Urgebanturque per gentilium idola jurare, they were urged to swear by the Idols of the Gentiles.*

Example 3.

Basilides a Souldier, being required to give an oath in a matter concerning his fellow-souldiers, denied to do it, plainly affirming he was a Christian, *Euseb.* l.6.cap.5. for I must make bold to set down the book which they have omitted, *Fox* vol.1.fol.71.

Answer.

Eusebius his words are, ὅρκον πρὸς τῶν συστρατιωτῶν αἰτηθείς, *cum a commilitonibus suis Sacramento adigeretur*; being urged by his fellow-souldiers to take the Military oath, which was wont then to be by the Idols and the Emperours, saith M. *Fox* in the place quoted. I do not remember that ever I met with so many authorities together so wickedly falsified, as these are.

Example

Example 4.

In the Plowmans Complaint is this, *viz. Lord, thou giveſt us a commandment of truth, in bidding us ſay, yea yea, nay nay, and ſwear for nothing; but Lord,* &c.

Anſwer.

This I confeſſe comes home to the point, if the allegation be faithful, but if this Plowman be *Chaucers Jack-Upland*, (as by his ſtile he ſeems to be) I never read that he was Canonized a Martyr, or dub'd a Father of the Church, though he be the dad of Engliſh Poets; nor do I think his Romance will paſſe amongſt rationall men for good authority.

Example 5.

John Wicliff was condemned for holding forth, that *all Oaths which be made for any contract or bargain betwixt man and man, were unlawfull*, Fox *vol.* 1. *fol.* 587.

Anſwer.

This was indeed the 41. Article charged againſt him; but what is this to ſolemn ſwearing when we are lawfully called to it?

Example 6.

William Swinderley, the 14. Article againſt him was, that he ſhould ſay, *that no man ought to ſwear for any thing, but ſimply without an oath, to affirm or deny.* Fox *vol.* 1. *fol.* 614.

Anſwer.

The Anſwer which (in the place quoted) he returned to that charge, ſhall be mine; *Oft* (ſaith he) *have I ſaid, and yet will, that men ſhould not ſwear by any creature, and that no man ſhould ſwear in idle, as well nigh all people uſeth.*

Example 7.

Theſe general received doctrines by the poor Chriſtians in this nation was, that *neither Pope, nor Prelate, nor Ordinary, can compell any to ſwear by any creature of God, or by the bible-book*, Fox. *vol.* 1. *fol.* 687.

Anſwer.

Both poor and rich Chriſtians of the Church of *England*, do retain the ſame doctrine at this day, and when either Pope, Prelate, or Ordinary, impoſe any other form of oath upon you but what is eſtabliſht by law, and wherein you are urged to ſwear, not by any creature, but by God, Creator, and Redeemer, you may complain and be relieved.

Example

Example 8.

William Thorpe, when *Tho. Arundel* Archbishop of *Canterbury* bid him lay his hand upon the book that he might swear thereby, replied, *Sir, A book is nothing else but a thing coupled together of many creatures, and to swear by any creature, both Gods Law and mans is against it.* One Article against him was, that he preacht in S. *Chads* Church in *Shrewsbury, that it is not lawfull to swear in any case.* Fox. *vol.*1. *fol.*689.690.692.701.

Answer.

It was ingeniously answered, and pat to the Archbishops urging him to swear (not as the law ordains upon) but by the book. But yet withal, that holy Martyr in the place quoted hath these words. [*Sir, this thing I say here, before these your Clerks, that how, where, when, and to whom men are bound to swear, I will, through Gods grace, be ever ready thereto.*] And as to the Article, he denied that ever he Preacht any such doctrine, either at *Shrewsbury*, or any where else, but only, that by S. *James* his authority, it is not lawfull to swear by any creature; nor in any case, where the taking of an oath could be excused to them, that have power to impose an oath. In which point I cordially concurr with him.

Example 9.

Elizabeth Young, *Anno*.1558. refused to swear, and persisted in that refusal, *&c.* Fox. *vol.*3. f.910.

Answer.

One of the oaths that was tendred her, was, what books she had sold; this she refused to take, because she would not betray her Christian friends; and the other oath they would have had her make was, whether she was a man or woman? this she refused, because that might be determined without an oath, to wit, by being searcht by women, and therefore she offer'd her self to be searcht, denying to give them any other satisfaction but that, and her bare affirming her self to be a woman, because what was more then that, in that case, was of evill. *Fox* in the place quoted.

Example 10.

The *Waldenses* professed it to be no way lawfull for a Christian to swear, whose defense Bishop *Usher* undertakes, *De Succes.* cap.6.

Example 11.

One Article urged against the Protestants of *Piedmont*, *Anno* 1655. was,

was, that they believed, it was not lawfull to swear any thing. *Morland, hist.* pa. 217.

Answer.

I joyn these, because they of *Piedmont* are the Relicts of the old *Waldenses*, against whom this was wont to be charged by the Papists, that they were wholy against all swearing. In which point the Archbishop of *Armagh* undertakes to vindicate them: but how? not by maintaining the opinion, but by proving it to be a calumny cast upon them by their adversaries. *Frater Nicolaus Eymericus*, 2. *part. direct. inquisitor. Hæresis* Waldensium, *tertia dicitur quod jurare in judicio, sive extra judicium, in quacunque causa, est illicitum & mortale peccatum: quartus eorum error est, quod dejurare in judicio coram judicibus de dicenda veritate & revelandis complicibus suis in hac secta, non est illicitum & peccatum, imo licitum & sanctum.* Friar *Nicolus Eymericus* (in the second part of his directions to the Inquisitors,) reckons this to be the 3d heresie of the *Waldenses*; That to swear, whether it be before a Judge or *extra*-judicially, in any case, is unlawfull, and a mortall sin. Their fourth errour is, That to swear falsly before a Judge in open Court, when the Question is about confessing truth, or revealing their Complices and fellow-Sectarians, is not unlawful or a sin, but lawfull and sacred. This Bishop *Usher* relates in the place fore-quoted, *pag.* 162. on purpose to evince the slanderous pens of Roman Scribes, from the incoherency of their calumnies, and from the extream unlikelihood that they who held it lawfull (in some cases) to forswear, should hold it unlawfull (in any case) to swear. If you did not see this to be the defeace which that learned Primat made, where are your eyes? if you did, where is your conscience? and where do you think must be our wit, if we believe those men upon their bare word, who belie so many Authours in writing?

Example 12.

Erasmus, Plato, Menander, Antonius, Hesiod, Theognis.

Answer.

This ranckling *Erasmus* with heathens, smells rank of the Jesuits spirit, whose devise it is to paint him hanging betwixt heaven and hell, as being neither Papist nor Protestant, in their verdict, and by consequence either a Mahometan or Pagan. But whatever his judgement was, as to Papists or Protestants, it was farr enough from the

opinion

opinion of the Quakers; for where he speaks of the unlawfulnesse of swearing, of the uselessnesse of oaths, he speaks of swearing in our ordinary communication, as is manifest from that clause [*In your bargains*,] ye need no oath, ye need no execration, which the Quaker Apologist either ignorantly or maliciously omits. I appeal to the place by him quoted, (his Annotations on *Mat.* 5. 34.) As to the rest of those authorities that are joynd with his, they are answered (*Sect.* 4. *Argum.* 1.) where S. *Pauls* practise is opposed to them which ought to be of more weight with Christians then all the sayings of all heathen Poets and Philosophers.

Example 13.

S. *Austin* in *Psa.* 88. It is well that God hath forbidden men to swear, lest by custom of swearing, *&c. de mendacio.* lest by swearing ye come to a custome.

Answer.

The very words here alledged, evince, that S. *Austin* speaks of common swearing, and certainly he must be beside his Text, if from the Old Testament he infer the unlawfulnes of all kinde of swearing; what his judgemtnt is about oaths, in his Treatise *de mendacio*, hath been already declared.

Example 14. and 15.

The *Albines* in *France*, and *Michael Sadler* in *Germany*.

Answer.

Your Authours say only, that that charge was alledged against them, but not that it was proved.

Example 16, 17, 18.

Jerome, Chrysostom, Justin Martyr, Walter Brute.

Answer.

When you name the Texts of these three Fathers, we shall examine whether you faithfully report them: As to *Walter Brute*, It is true, he affirmed what is alledged, but with protestation, that he would retract that opinion, if he were convinc't of the errour of it; and accordingly did, upon conference with the Bishop of *Hereford*, submit himself to the determination of the Church, as appears from your own Authour, *Fox vol.* 1. *pag.* 653.

The Last Example.

The Order of Middlebrough, which is no ways applicable to the Quakers Case, who have refused to pay Church-duties, and there-

by

by robb'd the Royal Exchequer, which is partly ſupplied out of tenths and firſt-fruits.

But why do you urge theſe Examples, or trouble his Majeſty and the Parliament with your Plea, to be exempted from taking an Oath? becauſe (forſooth) your conſcience will not allow you to ſwear, when you actually do ſwear in as ſolemn and auguſt a form as 'tis poſſible for the tongue of man to expreſſe, even then when you ſay you dare not ſwear, *pag.* 8. *God who is the ſearcher of hearts knows, that it is with holy reſpect, &c.* juſt like that ſullen boy, whom when his mother commanded to ſay, good morrow, to his godfather, perſiſted in a ſilent dump, till he was ſoundly baſted, and then blubberd out this outcry, *I cannot ſay, good morrow, not I.*

FINIS.